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A NEW SPECIES OF *PARASCOLOPSIS* (PISCES: NEMIPTERIDAE) FROM INDONESIA

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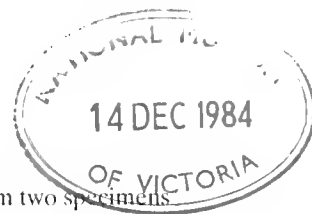
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ABSTRACT

A new species of *Parascolopsis* (Nemipteridae) is described from two specimens collected in 65-70m depth in Mentawi Strait, off the west coast of Sumatra, Indonesia. *Parascolopsis qantasi* sp. nov. is separable from congeners on the basis of differences in number of gill rakers on the first arch, extent of scalation on top of the head, and absence of scales on the lower limb of the preopercle.



INTRODUCTION

The genus *Parascolopsis* (type-species *P. townsendi*) was created by Boulenger (1901) who separated it from *Scolopsis* Cuvier (1815) by its lack of a suborbital spine. However, Norman (1966) observed that the suborbital spine in *Scolopsis* species may be variously reduced and raised doubts about the validity of *Parascolopsis*, a view concurred with by Rao and Rao (1981) who synonymised this genus with *Scolopsis*.

It is evident from examination of a wide range of material, however, that those species described as *Scolopsis* and which have a reduced suborbital spine should properly belong to *Parascolopsis*. Preliminary study by the senior author of cleared and stained specimens of both

genera indicates a number of significant osteological differences. These include jaw structure, development of the infraorbital bones, number of epipleural ribs, and degree of development of the second anal spine. In addition, species of *Parascolopsis* generally occur in deeper, offshore waters and differ in habit from *Scolopsis* which typically inhabit shallow water reefs. For the present we therefore retain *Parascolopsis* as a valid genus.

In this paper we describe a new species of *Parascolopsis* collected off the coast of Sumatra by the junior author during the JETINDOFISH survey of demersal fish resources in Indonesia waters.

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Fig. 1. *Parascalopsis qantasi*, holotype, NTM S.10997-001, 102.7 mm SL. (Photograph by T. Gloerfelt-Tarp).

The terminology used in our description follows that of Hubbs and Lagler (1958), except that body depth is taken immediately in front of the dorsal fin origin; head length is from the tip of the snout to the most posterior point of the opercular membrane; snout length is from the tip of the snout to the anterior fleshy margin of the orbit; interorbital width is the least bony width with the dividers pressed tightly against the bone; suborbital depth is the least measurement from the fleshy lower margin of the orbit to the lower suborbital margin; dorsal or anal fin length is the greatest overall basal length; length of dorsal or anal spines is measured from the base of the spine to its tip; length of longest dorsal or anal ray is measured from the base of the ray to its tip; pectoral and pelvic fin length is measured from the extreme base of the uppermost, or anterior ray, to the farthest tip of the fin, including filaments if any.

In the dorsal and anal fin the last ray is divided at its base and counted as one ray; the pectoral fin count includes any rudimentary rays; lateral line scale count is the number of pored scales in the lateral line; transverse scale rows is the number of scales above the lateral line from the origin of the dorsal fin downward and backward

to, but not including, the lateral line scale, and the number of scales below the lateral line from the origin of the anal fin forward and upward to the lateral line, these two counts being separated by a slash, e.g. 3/10; gill rakers are counted on the first gill arch and include rudimentary rakers.

Where different from the holotype, the measurements for the paratype are indicated in parentheses following the data for the holotype. Type-specimens have been deposited in the Lembaga Oseanologi Nasional, Jakarta (LON), and Northern Territory Museum, Darwin (NTM).

***Parascalopsis qantasi* sp. nov.**

(Fig. 1)

Holotype — NTM S.10997-001, 102.7mm SL, Indonesia, Sumatra, Mentawi Strait, N.E. of Sipora I. (1°59'S, 99°26'E), Bawal Putih II, bottom trawl, 65m, T. Gloerfelt-Tarp, 3 May 1983.

Paratype — LON NCIP 3843, 77.6mm SL, Indonesia, Sumatra, Mentawi Strait, S. of Selatan I. (3°24'S, 100°33'E), Bawal Putih II, bottom trawl, 67-70m, T. Gloerfelt-Tarp, 2 May 1983.

Diagnosis — A species of *Parascalopsis* with the following combination of characters: pectoral fin rays ii,14; pectoral

fins moderately long, reaching to or just short of level of vent; pelvic fins long, reaching beyond level of vent; gill rakers on first arch 12-14; scales on top of head in a V-shaped patch, reaching forward to level of mid-pupil; suborbital naked; a small spine at upper corner of suborbital, and two or three tiny spines on its posterior edge; lower limb of preopercle naked; base of pectoral fin black.

Description — Dorsal rays X,9; anal rays III,7; pectoral rays ii,14; lateral line scales 35 (34); transverse scale rows 3/11; gill rakers 14(12).

Body moderately elongate, depth 3.3 (3.2) in SL; head 2.9 (3.1) in SL; head a little longer than body depth, head length 0.9 (1.0) in body depth; snout short, bluntly rounded, 3.9 (4.2) in head; eye 2.5 (2.6) in head; diameter of eye much greater than snout length, 0.6 in snout; interorbital width 4.2 (4.0) in head; suborbital very shallow, least depth 15.4 (12.1) in head; least depth of suborbital 6.2 (4.7) in eye; dorsal fin length 1.9 (2.0) in SL; fourth or fifth dorsal spine longest, 2.2 (2.0) times length of first dorsal spine; fifth soft dorsal ray longest, 1.0 times length of longest spine; anal fin length 6.0 (5.9) in SL; first anal spine 1.9 in second anal spine; second anal spine 1.0 (0.9) in third anal spine; pectoral fins moderately long, reaching to or just short of level of vent, 1.5 (1.4) in head; pelvic fins long, reaching beyond level of vent, 1.4 (1.2) in head.

Mouth small, maxillary reaching to just behind anterior margin of eye; jaw teeth villiform, in narrow tapering bands in both jaws; upper jaw with 3 (4) pair of slightly enlarged, recurved teeth anteriorly. Scales on top of head in a V-shaped patch, extending forward between eyes to level of mid-pupil; snout and suborbital naked; suborbital with a small spine at upper corner, and 2 or 3 tiny spines on its posterior

edge; preopercle scaly, lower limb naked; posterior margin of preopercle finely denticulate; dorsal fin emarginate; caudal fin slightly forked.

Colour in alcohol — Overall pale; scales on top of head and back above lateral midline edged with dusky grey; traces of faint dusky grey markings across nape joining upper corner of opercles, between eyes behind posterior nostrils, and across tip of snout; holotype with traces of pearly-white on opercle and in front of pectoral fin base; dorsal fin with dusky grey diagonal lines or rows of spots; anal fin unmarked; caudal fin with dusky grey narrow, wavy bars; pectoral and pelvic fins unmarked; a dusky grey spot at base of pectoral fin and in axis of fin.

Colour in life (from colour transparencies) — Body dark brownish on back, paling to whitish below; dorsal fin faintly pink-suffused, with brownish diagonal lines or rows of spots; anal fin transparent; caudal fin yellowish-pink, with brownish narrow, wavy bars; pectoral fins yellowish-pink, a prominent black spot at base of fin; pelvic fins transparent.

Remarks — Six other nominal species are referable to the genus *Parascolopsis*. These are: *P. inermis* (Schlegel in Temminck and Schlegel, 1843); *P. townsendi* Boulenger, 1901; *P. eriomma* (Jordan and Richardson, 1909); *P. tosensis* (Kamohara, 1938); *P. aspinosa* (Rao and Rao, 1981); and *P. boesemani* (Rao and Rao, 1981).

Parascolopsis qantasi is separable from *P. inermis* and *P. eriomma* in having 12-14 gill rakers on the first arch (versus 8-10 in *P. inermis* and 17-19 in *P. eriomma*); from *P. townsendi* and *P. tosensis* in having the lower limb of the preopercle naked (versus scaly); and from *P. aspinosa* and *P. boesemani* in having head scales reaching

forward only to above the middle of the eyes (versus scales reaching forward to between level of anterior margin of eyes and posterior nostrils).

Parascolopsis qantasi is known from only two specimens trawled in 65-70m depth in Mentawi Strait, off the W. coast of Sumatra.

Etymology — Named *qantasi* in recognition of the invaluable assistance over three years given to the junior author by staff of the Denpasar (Bali) office of the Australian airline Qantas.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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RÉSUMÉ

Une nouvelle espèce de *Parascolopsis* (Nemipteridae) est décrite d'après deux spécimens ramassés à une profondeur de 65-70m à Mentawi Strait, près de la côte ouest de Sumatra, Indonésie. *Parascolopsis qantasi* se différencie des autres espèces du genre par le nombre de branchiospines, l'étendue des écailles sur le dessus de la tête et par l'absence d'écailles sur le membre inférieur du préopercle.

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